

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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O 081931Z SEP 78  
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2181  
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE  
NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 SAN JOSE 3832

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: NU  
SUBJ: STATUS OF CARAZO'S CA INITIATIVE RE NICARAGUA

1. SUMMARY: FONMIN CALDERON HAS RETURNED FROM HIS MEETINGS IN TEGUCIGALPA, SAN SALVADOR AND GUATEMALA WITH APPARENT AGREEMENT AS TO BASIC INTERESTS, ASSUMPTIONS, AND IMMEDIATE FURTHER STEPS DESIGNED TO MOVE THE CENTRAL AMERICAN INITIATIVE ON NICARAGUA ALONG. ROMERO AND LUCAS AND, LESS CLEARLY, PAZ, CALDERON REPORTS, ARE SEIZED WITH THE NEED TO COLLABORATE TO HASTEN SOME VIABLE SOLUTION, BUT INSIST ON A NON-INTERVENTIONIST APPROACH, A NEED TO AVOID CASTING THE INITIATIVE AS A "DUMP SOMOZA" ONE, AND A COMMON LACK OF DESIRE TO MEET AS CHIEFS OF STATE BEFORE A WORKABLE SOLUTION HAS BEEN AGREED TO WITH SOMOZA. IN GOOD PART IN RESPONSE TO GOG SUGGESTION, THE NEXT STEP APPEARS TO BE AN INDEPENDENT BUT COORDINATED DISPATCH OF "EMISSARIES" TO MANAGUA BY THE FOUR CA GOVERNMENTS,

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IN THE GOCR CASE IMMEDIATELY, MAINLY TO TAKE INDIVIDUAL SOUNDINGS OF SOMOZA, ESPECIALLY ANY RECEPTIVITY TO SOME FORMULA BY WHICH HE COULD LEAVE THE COUNTRY IN THE HANDS OF A DESIGNATE, OR SOME VARIATION THEREOF, AND DEPART FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OR PERMANENTLY, POSSIBLY WITHOUT RESIGNING. THE FOLLOWING STEP WOULD BE FOR FONMINS TO MEET AT THE UN, EARLIEST SEPT 19, TOGETHER WITH THE "EMISSARIES", TO COMPARE NOTES AND DECIDE HOW TO PROCEED TOWARD

THE ULTIMATE "MEDIATING" OBJECTIVE, A MEETING OF HEADS OF THE FIVE COUNTRIES TO PUT A STAMP OF APPROVAL ON ANY ACCEEABLE ARRANGEMENT THAT PROVES POSSIBLE. CARAZOSKGW APPEARS LESS CERTAIN OF HOW CONTACT OR CONTACTS WOULD PROCEED WITH XADJ OPPOSITION, OR WHICH OPPOSITION, IN NICARAGUA. FINALLY, HE AGREES THAT POSTPONING OAS DEBATE ON THE VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE AT LEAST A WEEK BEYOND SPET 12 IS MOST DESIRABLE, AND WILL URGE PEREZ TO LAY OFF AS LONG AS POSSIBLE TO FACILITATE THE CUROWFT CA EFFORT. CARAZO IS MOST ANXIOUS

TO KNOW HOW A SEPT 12 VOTE ON CONVENING MFM MIGHT GO TO BE ABLE TO BETTER TO GUAGE TACTICS BOTH RE INFLUENCING SOMOZA AND THE VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE.

2. CARAZO AND CALDERON CALLED ME IN THE MORNING OF SEPT 8 TO REVIEW RESULTS OF THE LATTER'S TRIP AND DISCUSS WHERE THE GOCR NOW SEES ITS CA INITIATIVE HEADING. FONMIN CONSIDERS HIS VISITS TO HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN REACHING AN INITIAL CONSENSUS, AS OUTLINED ABOVE, THOUGH WITH THE EXCEPTION OF GOG, LITTLE ADVANCED, NEW THINKING WAS OFFERED. LUCAS FLOATED THE IDEA OF SENDING A RECENT EX-PRESIDENT OF EACH COUNTRY AS AN "EMISSARY" TO TALK WITH SOMOZA, AN IDEA TOTALLY UNATTRACTIVE TO COSTA RICA FOR OBVIOUS POLITICAL REASONS. THE GUATEMALA IDEA WAS ACCEPTED, HOWEVER, WITH THE VARIATION THAT EACH COUNTRY WOULD DECIDE FOR ITSELF WHO WOULD BE USED. THE EMISSARIES WILL BE INSTRUCTED TO AVOID ANY SUGGESTION OF CENTRAL AMERICAN "INTERVENTION IN NICARAGUAN AFFAIRS" AND CAUTIONED TO MAKE NO DIRECT APPROACH TO SOMOZA

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SOMOZA THAT HE STEP DOWN, THOUGH THEY MAY INSINUATE TO SOMOZA THAT HIS DEPARTURE FROM OFFICE COULD PROVE TO BE A BASIC PREREQUISITE TO SOLUTION OF THE NICARAGUAN SITUATION. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER INDIVIDUAL EMISSARIES MIGHT DISCUSS A DEPARTURE SCENARIO IF SOMOZA SEEMED RECEPTIVE, BUT CARAZO WAS ATTRACTED BY A SUGGESTION ATTRIBUTED TO GOG VICE PRESIDENT VILLAGRAN KRAMEC THAT SOMOZA BE PERSUADED TN TAKE A THREE-MONTH LEAVE OF ABSENCEWHICH COULD BE EXTENDED INDEFINITELY, LEAVING EFFECTIVE POWER OF GOVERNMENT IN THE HANDS OF A DESIGNATE, OR SOMETHING SIMILAR.

3. CARAZO WAS NOT VERY CLEAR ABOUT HOW THIS WOULD ALL BE COORDINATED, DESIRABLE AS THIS WOULD BE TO TRY TO IMPEDE SOMOZA'S PLAYING EACH COUNTRY OFF AGAINST THE OTHERS. IN COSTA RICA'S CASE, HE IS AGAIN MEETING TODAY WITH HIS CLOSE NICARAGUAN FRIEND AND SOMOZA'S COUSIN, RENE LACAYO DEBAYLE, WHO WAS TO ARRIVE ON A GON PLANE THIS MORNING, AND WILL DEPEND ON HIM AND COSTA RICAN ALVARO GONZALEZ, CATERPILLAR DISTRIBUTOR HERE, MARRIED TO A NICARAGUAN AND CLOSELY ALLIED TO BUSINESS INTERESTS TO THE NORTH. (GONZALEZ WAS, TOGETHER WITH THE GOCR AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, ESCORT FOR MRS CARTER AT THE CARAZO INAUGURATION.)

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4. CARAZO INSISTED THAT DESPITE LOCAL CRITICISM, HE HAD NO INTENTION OF "DISMOUNTING FROM THE BURRO" IN REGARD TO THIS INITIATIVE, EVEN IF IT TOOK YEARS TO ACHIEVE RESULTS. HE AGAIN EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF THAT THE BEST TIME FOR BEGINNING TO DEAL WITH SOMOZA HAD PASSED, BUT BETTER LATE THAN NEVER. HE ATTRIBUTED LOCAL OBJECTIONS TO HIS INITIATIVE IN PART TO THE "REFLEXIVE, SHALLOW CONCERN WITH WHAT TO DO ABOUT SOMOZA NOW, TO THE EXCLUSION OF WHAT TO DO ABOUT NICARAGUA IN THE LONGER RUN". WHILE HIS CONCERN IS FOR THE LONG-RUN, HE FEELS THAT IF SOMOZA DOES NOT LEAVE POWER WITHIN THE NEXT THREE MONTHS IT WILL BE TOO LATE TO SALVAGE THE SITUATION AND AVOID SERIOUS AND LONGER-LASTING IMPLICATIONS FOR COSTA RICA AND CENTRAL AMERICA. CARAZO IS NOT AT ALL CONFIDENT OF SUCCESS, BUT APPRECIATES THE LACK OF OTHER ALTERNATIVES AND DOES HOLD OUT SOME HOPE THAT SOMOZA MIGHT BE INFLUENCED IN THE DIRECTION OF GIVING WAY, IF NECESSARY, WITHOUT FORMALLY RESIGNING, EITHER IN FAVOR OF A CONGRESSIONAL DESIGNATE

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OR THROUGH QUICK CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE, SOME OTHER TRANSITORY ARRANGEMENT. HE IS, HOWEVER, NOW SOMEWHAT LESS OPTIMISTIC THAT IT WILL BE EASY TO FIND WITH WHOM TO DEAL IN THE OPPOSITION, BUT HOPES THAT SOME ELEMENTS OF THE "TWELVE" AND FAO WOULD COALESCE AND TREAT POSITIVELY ANY SUCH DEVELOPMENT.

5. AS FOR THE OAS, HE REITERATED HIS VIEW THAT PEREZ' INITIATIVE WAS MOST UNFORTUNATE. HE WAS GRATIFIED THAT PEREZ HAD DECIDED TO MODERATE THE TONE OF THE DISCUSSION IN THE OAS, AS INDICATED BY MACHIN'S SEPT. 7 PERFORMANCE, BUT THE INITIATIVE STILL PLACED COSTA RICA AND THE OTHER CENTRAL AMERICANS IN A QUANDRY. IF THEY VOTED FOR THE RESOLUTION, THEY WOULD RUN THE RISK OF CUTTING OFF CONTACT WITH SOMOZA. IF THEY VOTED AGAINST THE RESOLUTION, THEY MIGHT HELP TO TAKE SOME OF THE PRESSURE OFF SOMOZA AND THEREBY MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVE. ALSO VERY MUCH ON HIS MIND WAS THE FEAR THAT A VOTE AGAINST THE RESOLUTION WOULD APPEAR LOCALLY AS A SIGN OF COSTA RICAN SUPPORT FOR SOMOZA AND, HE SAID, "THIS WOULD BE AN AFFRONT TO THE COSTA RICAN PUBLIC AS WELL AS THE PUBLIC OF ALL LATIN AMERICA." CARAZO DOES HOPE THAT FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE VENEZUELAN RESOLUTION CAN BE POSTPONED AT LEAST UNTIL AFTER THE CA FONMINS GET TOGETHER IN NEW YORK SEPTEMBER 19 OR 20 TO CHECK THE SCORE ON THEIR "EMISSARIES" FINDINGS AND ANY OTHER DEVELOPMENTS. A SUGGESTION CALDERON MENTIONED, APPARENTLY OF GOG ORIGIN, THAT AGREEMENT MIGHT BE REACHED SEPT. 12 TO HAVE A STUDY COMMISSION FORMED BEFORE ANY MFM IS DECIDED ON DOES NOT APPEAL TO CARAZO, BUT IF DELAY CANNOT BE OTHERWISE ACHIEVED, HE WOULD PROBABLY BE WILLING TO GO FOR SOME SUCH ALTERNATIVE. HE INDICATED HE WOULD ASK THE NEW GOV AMBASSADOR HERE, HIS LONG-TIME PERSONAL FRIEND, TO PASS ALONG THE HOPE TO PEREZ THAT HE NOT PRESS TOO HARD FOR A DECISION ON SEPT. 12.

6. AS EXPECTED, HE ASKED IF WE HAD A RUNDOWN OF HOW OAS MEMBER  
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COUNTRIES MIGHT VOTE ON SEPT. 12. I TOLD HIM WE WERE TRYING TO GET WHAT HE REFERRED TO AS AN "INVENTORY", AND WOULD SHARE OUR FINDINGS. WITH THAT KNOWLEDGE, HE SAID, HE WOULD BE ABLE TO DECIDE HOW MUCH LEVERAGE HE HAD WITH SOMOZA, I.E., WHETHER HE COULD PRESENT THE CA MEDIATION EFFORT AS SOMOZA'S ONLY ALTERNATIVE TO AN UNFAVORABLE VOTE IN THE OAS.

7. FINALLY, CARAZO ADVISED THAT GON AMBASSADOR LACAYO FLEW TO MANAGUA LAST NIGHT, HAD RETURNED AND WAS PROBABLY WAITING FOR HIM IN ANOTHER OFFICE, AND THAT HE WOULD ADVISE ME OF ANYTHING NEW THEIR MEETING MIGHT INDICATE. HE PLANS TO MEET WITH LACAYO DAILY, HE SAID, IF ONLY TO DEMONSTRATE THAT "COSTA RICA WANTS TO HELP NICARAGUA OUT OF ITS CRISIS".

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## Message Attributes

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